

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Thursday, 9 July 2020

STAGE 3 RESTRICTIONS FOR FLEMINGTON AND NORTH MELBOURNE ESTATES

Following a comprehensive testing blitz across the nine locked down public housing towers in Flemington and North Melbourne, the Chief Health Officer has provided advice about the next steps that can now be taken across both estates.

In just five days, 2,515 residents have been tested, identifying 158 positive cases. Work is ongoing to identify all close contacts.

The highest number of cases have been found at 33 Alfred Street, North Melbourne, with at least 53 confirmed cases. This represents around 11 per cent of residents.

Given such a high number of positive cases and the unknown source of much of the transmission, our health experts have advised that, just as with an aged care facility, all residents of 33 Alfred Street will be classed as close contacts who must isolate for 14 days in total.

We'll continue to support these Victorians with food, back to school resources and any other kind of assistance they might need as they stay home and stay safe. Daily exercise will be scheduled and supervised.

Onsite medical teams will continue to provide medical care and regular testing of these residents – ensuring we have the insight and information we need to guide future decisions.

Happily, testing has shown no cases at 9 Pampas Street and 159 Melrose Street, meaning tenants at those addresses will move to Stage 3 'Stay at Home' restrictions at 5pm today.

Towers at 12 Sutton Street, 76 Canning Street, 12 Holland Court, 120 Racecourse, 126 Racecourse Road and 130 Racecourse Road, will reopen from 11:59pm tonight – ensuring that when these residents leave their home for one of the four reasons, they can do so safely.

For positive cases and their close contacts who live in these buildings, a dedicated and integrated management response has been developed to support them while also protecting other residents. That includes encouraging positive cases and close contacts to take up alternative accommodation offsite for the period of their isolation.

For those who choose not to relocate, each resident will have their own single point of contact with daily check-ins and food, medical care and mental health support services all provided. This includes having a dedicated team of community leaders and community nurses who'll be on hand to provide care door-to-door.

Consistent with all positive cases and close contacts, regular checks will be undertaken to ensure these residents remain at home.

Because of the continued risk these towers represent, communal laundries will close, and external laundry services will be provided to all residents. A deep clean of every floor will occur every day, with high touchpoints in lifts and stairwells cleaned at least five times a day.

Medical clinic marquees will also be set-up outside each tower to check the symptoms of residents as they exit and enter, with testing, and health checks also available.

For the estates with positive cases, Victoria Police will continue to provide support as tenants transition to Stage 3 restrictions.

As a Government and as a state, we thank the residents of these estates for their role in helping to slow the spread of this virus. For more information about Stage 3 restrictions, please visit: www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“The case numbers within these towers confirm just how rapidly – and dangerously – coronavirus can spread.”

“I want to thank each and every one of the residents who came forward and got tested. In doing, so you’re helping to protect your families and communities – and our state.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Housing Richard Wynne

“This was a tough decision, but the right decision. Unchecked, this virus has the potential to tear through these towers and tragically, take lives.”

“For those residents who are confirmed cases or close contacts, we’ll continue to support you any way we can.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville

“We have in place operational arrangements to ensure the health and safety of all residents while supporting the needs of those who are in quarantine.”